

From: [Sierra Club Membership Services](#) on behalf of [Laura Kosbie](#)
To: [Scoping_Delta_Plan@Delta_Council](#)
Subject: Delta Plan Scoping Comments
Date: Saturday, January 22, 2011 11:33:03 AM

Jan 22, 2011

Chair Philip Isenberg
CA

Dear Chair Isenberg,

I attended a symposium last year regarding the future of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta ecosystem, and the political reality of the impending collapse terrified me. I am not as sympathetic toward the "fish" as other fellow environmentalists, but I still see a great danger in allowing the natural Delta to collapse at the hands of politicians and private corporations. Allowing companies to sell the Delta water and divert its flow from natural residential recipients will set a legal precedent that will be very hard to dismantle in the future. As a state we need to put our foot down and refuse to allow our water system to be commoditized for a profit. We should never allow our natural resources to be compromised simply to increase state revenue. It is not about valuing the lives of fish over the lives of humans, but rather it is about valuing the lives of both current and future California residents. We need to focus on creating a sustainable system rather than a quick fix. Therefore, I recommend that the Council use the following broad recommendations to guide the development of the draft Delta Plan and a draft EIR that analyzes a broad set of alternatives.

1. Guarantee Fresh Water to Support & Restore the Delta Ecosystem: The Bay-Delta ecosystem is a national and statewide resource critical to California's economic health, to the plants, animals, birds and fish that live here, and to the health of our communities.
2. Enforce Existing Water Pollution Control Laws: Commit to full implementation and enforcement of state and federal laws to protect both surface water and groundwater quality. The state is failing to meet existing standards to protect Bay-Delta surface water and groundwater quality, and is lagging in the development of new standards and pollutant loads needed to ensure the health of the estuary's waters. Contaminants such as salt, selenium, mercury, nutrients and pesticides pollute drinking water and damage the health of the Delta, and the damage is mounting.
3. Reducing Reliance on the Delta: Recognize that California has dramatic opportunities to invest in regional water supplies (e.g. agricultural and urban conservation, waste water recycling, groundwater management and urban storm water capture) that can allow the state to meet its future needs, while simultaneously facilitating the restoration of the Delta ecosystem.
4. More Water Exports Should Not be Promised before Safe Limits are Established: Existing export of fresh water flows from the Bay-Delta estuary should be contingent on ensuring sufficient water to support and restore the Bay-Delta ecosystem in perpetuity; and

5. Reduce Risks to people and property by determining a safe yield for water exports: A "water grab" that allows more water exports from the Bay-Delta estuary, ignoring the restraints of nature, expanding exports by promising unrealistic inflated quantities of water does not promote reliability, it promotes conflict. Providing water to areas south of the Delta must protect the habitat, local economies of the Sierra, Northern California, Delta and the San Joaquin River regions.

6. Enforce water rights: Don't allow politically-connected and powerful interests to sell publicly owned water supplies at a profit while damaging surrounding communities and their water supplies.

7. Protect Taxpayers: Taxpayers and ratepayers must not be soaked again -- either through bonds or direct payments for the costs of exporting this water. Any plan adopted to export water out of the Delta from the Northern California and Sierra watersheds must be cost effective and ensure those exporting water from the Bay-Delta estuary can pay the mitigation costs, design, and capital costs.

Thank you for considering the above comments. I look forward to following the work of the Council as it develops the Delta Plan.

Sincerely,

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